1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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Household Furniture

The furniture in the ancient huts was extremely scanty, consisting of mats spread on the floor, stone pillows (*ngarua*), calabashes for water (fig. 15, *d*), baskets for food, and wooden images or tablets hanging from the thatching. Mats (*moenga*) were made of reed (pl. 2, *C*) and the fine specimens were highly valued. In modern houses, people who have no matress sleep on layers of grass, called *heriki* when used for this purpose. Their ancestors are said to have covered themselves with grass. The square stone pillows (fig. 15, *c*) were often decorated with straight lines or with the stylized representation of the vulva. Such pillows were not used elsewhere in Polynesia where wood was abundant. A single specimen of a carved stone pillow has been found in Hawaii (25, p. 125, fig. 102).

Community Houses

Wealthy people built special large houses called *hare-nui* to shelter their guests during a feast (*koro*). There must have existed a sort of competition between the feast givers as to who could erect the largest *koro* house. As on Mangareva, they were decorated with images (see p. 262).

Kitchen Shelters

Tepano assured me, though I could not verify his statement, that the ancient inhabitants of the island sometimes erected simple shelters to protect them from wind and rain. They placed in the ground seven rafters (*oka matua*) whose lower ends were curbed and upper ends tied to a horizontal pole (*hahaga*) supported by two vertical posts (*oka pou*). Horizontal sticks were tied to the rafters; then the whole structure was covered with reeds (*ngaatu*), sugar-cane leaves (*rau toa*), and grass (*mauku*). These easily constructed huts were readily abandoned and were probably analogous to the light structures built around the oven to form a kitchen. The oven was "palisadoed to the windward" (130, vol. 2, p. 256). People enjoyed sitting in front of or around the cooking place, where the men took their meals (87, p. 39).

Boat Houses

Near the pier of Hanga-roa are some sheds where the islanders keep their boats. With the exception of the thatched roof, nothing in the structure of such sheds is old. The roof, which is supported by stakes set at wide intervals, is composed of transverse sticks between which meager bunches of straw are stuck. The walls are made of piled stones.

Comparison with Other Polynesian Thatched Houses

The general shape of the Easter Island thatched house resembles the small, low huts with elliptical floor plan of the Tuamotus (in former days) and Rapa. The curving walls formed by bent rafters of Easter Island houses are

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Stone Houses

CHICKEN HOUSES

Ancient Easter Island hen houses (*hare moa*) were rectangular heaps of stones with a long, narrow, chamber reached by two long, narrow passages. Anyone intending to steal had to remove the stones and consequently make a noise which would attract the owners. Near the ancient village of Vai-tara-kai-ua is a hen house still in good condition. 235 343 172

The lower part is made of basalt blocks heaped and adjusted with great care. The size of the stones decreases toward the top, and the upper part is composed of small stones, piled at random. The whole building is rectangular with both ends slightly curved. Two small passages lead to the central chamber. One of the entrances is surmounted by an arched stone. Under the opening two superimposed stones make a kind of staircase. The structure is 7.3 meters long, 3.3 meters wide, and 1.8 meters high.

STONE HOUSES AT ORONGO

A detailed survey of the village of Orongo was made by the Routledge expedition (195). It is briefly summarized here. The houses composing the village of Orongo stretch in two rows along the narrow ridge between the crater and the sea cliff on the southern rim of Rano-kao. At one point, the two rows overlap one another. 361

The houses are made of slabs which come from a natural quarry below the village on the crater side (pl. 3, *B*). The rock "is a fine grained volcanic sandstone bedded in large laminae." Despite numerous variations, these houses are all built according to the same general pattern. They have an oval or elliptical ground plan and their structure, like that of the thatched houses, suggests the form of an upturned canoe. The back walls rest against rocks or the slope of the volcano rim. In some places the ground has been excavated to obtain a level space. The foundations are made of rough cubes of stone, laid in the form of an oval. The inner side of the foundation course is lined with large vertical slabs which are set on edge and diminish in height from the center to the ends. The walls which have an average thickness of 1.5 to 1.8 meters, are remarkably solid. They are made of small or shattered fragments, "laid in horizontal course with broken joints." The spaces between the courses are filled flush with small stones. The back wall is lined on the outside with rough, wedge-shaped slabs, held in place by earth filled against them. The front wall has no external vertical slabs. The masonry has niches and shelves. There is sometimes a hatch between two adjoining houses and certain of them have inner annexes. The slabs or laminae set above the walls are "imbricated or 'tumble-home' till the opening is reduced to such a size that it can be spanned by a series of single slabs, thus completing the arch or roof. For these roofing slabs the curved laminae are chosen, and they are often of such dimensions that ten men would be required to move a single slab into place." 342

Like the thatched huts, these stone houses have the door in the middle of one side. This doorway is a sort of tunnel, lined on all sides by slabs, with two uprights and a lintel at the entrance. Some houses have a sill, formed by a slab sunk vertically into the ground, so that its upper edge is flush with the surface of the door. Some houses have two apertures, and in a few the aperture is double, the two passages being side by side.

When finished, these houses are covered with a thick layer of soil (at places 70 cm. deep). The slabs opposite the door are painted with representations of birds, European boats, dancing paddles, or the figure of the god with big eyes. Lintels or slabs in the houses are frequently covered with engraved vulvas. Outside a house there may be pits lined with stones, which serve as ovens or storage places.

The size of these houses varies greatly. The largest measures about 10 meters by

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
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● 343
[231]

FIG. 86.

HOUSE FOR CHICKENS.

FIG. 87.

[226]

A TOWER USED BY FISHERMEN.

[facing p. 218]

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
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The food consisted of the usual tropical products, such as
241 potatoes, bananas, sugar-cane, and taro. Animal diet formed a
262 very small part of it, rats being the only form of mammal; but
[136] chickens played an important rôle in native life, and the remains
of the dwellings made for them are much more imposing than
[231 those for human beings. They are solid cairns, in the centre of
343] which was a chamber, running the greater part of their length;
it was entered from outside by two or more narrow tunnels, down
which the chickens could pass. They were placed here at night
for the sake of safety, as it was impossible to remove the stones
[226 in the dark without making a noise (fig. 86). Fish are not very
438] plentiful, as there is no barrier reef, but they also were an article
of diet, and were bartered by those on the coast for the vegetable
products obtained by those further inland. Fish hooks made of
226 stone were formerly used, and a legend tells of a man who had
marvellous success because he used one made of human bone.
The heroes of the tales are also spoken of as fishing with nets.
There are in various places on the coast round towers, built of
[343] stone, which are said to have been look-out towers whence
watchers on land communicated the whereabouts of the fish to
those at sea; these contained a small chamber below which was
used as a sleeping apartment (fig. 87). Turtles appear on the
carvings on the rock, and are alluded to in legend, and turtle-
shell ornaments were worn; but the water is too cold for them
ever to have been common, and Anakena is almost the only
sandy bay where they could have come on shore.

291 The sole form of dress was the cloth made from the paper
[287] mulberry, and known throughout the South Seas as tapa; it
was used for loin-cloths and wraps, which the Spaniards describe
as fastening over one shoulder. Head-gear was a very important
point, as witnessed by the way the islanders always stole the
caps of the various European sailors. The natives had various
forms of crowns made of feathers, some of them reserved for
special occasions. Cherished feathers, particularly those of
white cocks, were brought out of gourds, where they had been
carefully kept, to manufacture specimens for the Expedition.
The crowns are generally made to form a shade over the eyes,
like the head-dresses of the images. Naturally, every effort was
made to find the prototype of the image hats. No one recollected
ever seeing anything precisely like it, but among the pictures
drawn for us of various head-decorations was a cylindrical hat

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
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cross-legged around it, howling all night by the light of flares. As no information was volunteered to us about such celebrations, the natives were asked if they had ever known a similar figure, and an old man at once replied that there had existed one just like the description, made of reeds, as a memorial of a dead wife or "fine" child; it stood in front of the house, or was sometimes carried to a hillock where the people assembled to mourn. One of the officers of the La Pérouse Expedition also described a figure seen near a platform; it was 11 feet in height, clothed in white tapa (*"étoffe blanche du pays"*); it had hanging round the neck a basket covered with white, and by the side of this bag the figure of a child 2 feet long. This seems to confirm the information that it was intended to represent a woman.

Another great festivity, given for a father either living or dead, was the "KORO." This was a house-party on a very extended scale. A special dwelling made with poles and thatched was put up, and, according to accounts, which surround it no doubt with a halo from the past, measured some hundreds of feet in length and 20 feet in height. An old man stated that at a celebration at which he was present there were "a hundred guests," a number which is probably a guess, but the addition that there were "ten cooking-places" sounds like memory. Invitations to these festivities were much in request, as there was "no work to do"; presents of food were brought to the hero who distributed them to the party. They seem to have lasted indefinitely, going on for months, and the time was passed with various entertainments. The old people sang, the young people danced, and the host, who lived in a little house near, came and looked on. On the last day there was a great feast, and the house was broken down with the aid of the carved wooden lizards, which are associated with the island (fig. 117). We were puzzled in coming across a rough stone building, near Anakena, which seemed to be neither ahu, dwelling, nor chicken-house; it had been, the men told us, a shelter for the posts of the koro, where they were kept in readiness for the next celebration.

There was yet another entertainment which is said to have been in honour of a mother, as a koro was of a father. In at least four different places on the island are to be seen a dancing-ground known as "KAUNGA." It is a narrow strip paved with pebbles, over 200 feet in length by 2 feet in width, and not